

Letter of Intent Guide for Applicants to the SPPH MSc or PhD Programs

This guide is for applicants to the SPPH MSc and PhD program. It provides further instructions and advice for applicants on the Letter of Intent (LOI), a required component of MSc and PhD applications.

SPPH values equity, diversity, and inclusion, and strongly encourages Indigenous persons, as well as persons representing diverse racial and ethnic contexts, to apply to our graduate programs. Applicants are invited to tell the admissions committee, through your Letter of Intent and other supporting documents, how you might contribute as a student to our knowledge, understanding, or experiences of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the MSc or PhD Program.

Length:

There is no minimum length for the LOI. The recommended length is about 700 words or about 1.5 pages single spaced. Please do not submit an LOI that is significantly longer (i.e. over 3 pages or over 1500 words).

Format:

There are no specific formatting requirements. We expect LOI documents to be professional and easy to read. We suggest using a standard 12-pt font (Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman, etc.) and standard margins (about 1in or 3cm).

Content:

The LOI is your chance to tell the Admissions Committee about yourself in your own voice. A good LOI is well-written and tells a clear story about who you are and why you want to pursue an MSc or PhD degree at SPPH. You should use specific examples in your LOI.

The LOI should address the following questions (not necessarily in this order):

- Why do you want to pursue an MSc or PhD? What goals will an MSc or PhD help you achieve?
 - There are many reasons to pursue MSc or PhD study. Please tell the Admissions Committee about your goals and how the MSc or PhD program can help you achieve them.
 - You can also include information about the skills or knowledge you hope to gain from an MSc or PhD.
- What are your research interests? Why do you want to pursue these interests at SPPH?
 - SPPH supports a wide variety of research. Please tell the Admissions Committee about your interests in population and public health.
 - Please include an explanation for why you are choosing to apply to SPPH and how SPPH can help you pursue your research interests. You can include information about how your interests fit within the umbrella of population and public health.
 - You may have more than one interest, or you may be interested in more than one topic. You can include multiple interests if you would like.
 - If you have a confirmed supervisor (required for PhD applicants), please explain how your interests overlap with your supervisor's research.
- How has your past education and experience prepared you to be successful as a graduate student?
 - Please tell the Admissions Committee why you think you would be a good graduate student.

- It is often helpful to provide specific examples from your past study, research, or work that highlight how you might be successful as a graduate student.
- You may also wish to expand on your past experience with quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research.
- If your previous work or study is not in the area of public health, please tell the Committee more about why you are interested in changing to public health study.

Additional Notes:

- You are welcome to cite specific sources in your LOI, but remember that the LOI is not a research proposal. A list of references is not required.
- The admissions committee will not penalize small grammatical or typographical errors, but an LOI full of errors or one that is hard to read can hurt an application overall.